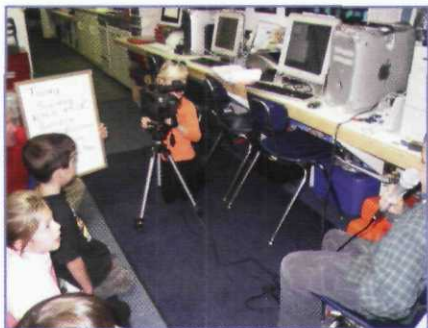


EDITORIAL

Reading and Writing and Technology Education! It's All About Communication!



Technology and Children is published four times a year (September, December, March, and May) by the International Technology Education Association. Subscriptions are included in all group membership dues. Student members may choose *Technology and Children* as part of their membership. Other ITEA members may subscribe to the journal for \$25.00 per year; \$35.00 outside the U.S. Library and nonmember subscriptions are \$35.00 per year; \$45.00 outside the U.S. Single copies of back issues are available for \$6.50 (\$9.00 for nonmembers) plus shipping and handling.

Advertising Sales
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Subscription Claims
All subscription claims must be made within 60 days of the first day of the month appearing on the cover of the journal. *Because of repeated delivery problems outside the continental United States, journals will be shipped only at the customer's risk. ITEA will ship the subscription copy, but assumes no responsibility thereafter.*

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Technology and Children, Address Change
ITEA, 1914 Association Drive, Suite 201
Reston, VA 20191-1539

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If you were to ask most elementary teachers what subjects they teach well or feel most confident teaching, reading and language arts would be at the top of the list. That's because elementary teacher training programs spend a great deal of time teaching prospective teachers to teach reading, writing, and spelling. Technology education, on the other hand, is fairly unexplored territory for many elementary teachers—until recently, that is. Now more teachers are learning how easy it is to integrate technology education into the daily curriculum. We hope by the time you finish reading this issue of *Technology and Children*, you too will find how exciting and easy it is to connect language arts and technology education.

Terry Thode

Teachers and students spend a major part of every school day working on formal and informal reading, writing, and other language arts skills in both fictional and non-fictional settings. Whether we're talking about reading for information, recreational books, movies, radio shows, reports, or conversation, it's all about communication. From the earliest times, when people used painted symbols and sounds to communicate with others, we've seen technology take us to today's high tech cell phones with e-mail capability, digital cameras, books-on-computers, interactive Internet Web sites, and MP3s with a digital photo display, to name a few. All of these devices require good communication skills to use effectively. You can capitalize on student interest for all this technology by incorporating some technology education into your

lessons and still meet your main goals to make your students accomplished readers and writers.

You don't have to have all the fancy equipment to make this happen. Many of you do have computers, Internet access, and digital cameras, so your students can produce their own books, script and produce a "how-to" video or computer presentation, write technical directions, or make safety posters with messages. All of these require the students to research information, write ideas down, and communicate with others to find a way to get their message across.

Another way to get started is to make use of the many childrens' books that have natural connections to technology education activities—just check out the Books-to-Briefs entries as well as Chuck Linnell's article for some book ideas. Literature is one area where students readily connect what they read to their own experiences. It provides a natural, comfortable environment for both teachers and students to show the connections between technology education and language arts. Adding the hands-on technology education component, such as designing and building a model or making a book diorama come to life with electricity, calls for different ways to solve problems or present ideas, and the kids love it!

If you are wondering how you can teach technology education when you have so much on your plate already with "standards," accountability, and national assessments for reading and math, be sure to read the TECH

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Message From the President of TECC

Research shows that elementary school teachers, more often than other teachers, tend to be science-shy. The result is that the teacher may opt to not include science concepts as an integrated part of the regular curriculum. It is plausible that the same anxieties teachers have about teaching science in an elementary classroom also apply to the teaching of technology.

Teaching technology is a hands-on, minds-on process that engages your students but can also cause perceived disruptions to the typical way a teacher regularly conducts class. New teachers benefit from sharing ideas with their mentors, and they grow as they learn from their mistakes and improve their instructional planning and classroom management. When any teacher tries something new in the classroom, he or she is like a new teacher in many ways. It is helpful to get ideas on how to manage the new process from other teachers who have tried it.

The Technology Education for Children Council (TECC) is dedicated to helping teachers understand what works when it comes to teaching technology to their students in integrated, relevant ways. The Council does this through its contributions to *Technology and Children* in cooperation with the International Technology Education Association.

In an effort to expand the outreach effort of the Council, TECC would like

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to start an electronic newsletter that helps teachers know what works.

Elementary School Technology Education: What Works will be developed and distributed solely by TECC. The format of the newsletter is simple. It will feature teacher descriptions of what works for them when it comes to teaching technology and engineering in their elementary classrooms. The newsletter will be posted in pdf format and will be downloadable from the TECC Web site. Subscribers will be notified about new issues by e-mail.

Take a second to write a brief description of what has been working for you when it comes to teaching technology. Include your e-mail address, phone number, or mailing address so other teachers can contact you for advice. And submit the description to Dr. Vincent Childress at childres@ncat.edu. To subscribe to the



newsletter, simply e-mail Dr. Childress and specify that you would like to be notified by e-mail of new issues of *Elementary School Technology Education: What Works*.

Do not forget to make your plans to attend the TECC sessions at the annual ITEA conference in Kansas City. You can find out more information at: <http://www.iteawww.org/D5.html>

Also consider attending the Children's Engineering Convention in February. More information on this opportunity is available at www.vtea.org/ESTE/convention/

See you in Kansas City. 💡

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EDITORIAL

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Techniques and Resources columns by Jared Berrett. There are more ideas and useful information from our regular columnists—Christine Nelson, Krista Jones, Ginger Whiting, Diane Fisher, Sharon Brusic, and Vince Childress—all of whom have lots of knowledge and experience about ways to integrate technology education with language

arts. We also welcome our new contributors and hope we have more coming from you in future issues.

It's December and a busy, exciting time for everyone. This season always finds me going in many directions all at one time and behind in most everything. But one thing will get done on time, and that is my wish for all of you to have a very joyous holiday season and a

Happy New Year 2005! Thanks for joining us, and we'll see you at the International Technology Education Association Conference in Kansas City in April! 💡

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